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Chapter 13

Communicating

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Learning Objectives

LO 1 Discuss important advantages of two-way communication.

LO 2 Identify communication problems to avoid.

LO 3 Describe when and how to use different communication channels.

LO 4 Give examples of ways to become a better “sender” and “receiver” of information.

LO 5 Explain how to improve downward, upward, and horizontal communication.

LO 6 Summarize how to work with the company grapevine.

LO 7 Describe the boundaryless organization and its advantages.

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Interpersonal Communication

Communication

- The transmission of information and meaning from one party to another through the use of shared symbols.

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One-Way Communication Is Common [1]

One-Way Communication

A process in which information flows in only one direction—from the sender to the receiver, with no feedback loop.

- Example: a manager sends an email to a subordinate without asking for a response.

- Sender has a “meaning” to communicate and encodes the meaning into symbols.
- Sender then transmits message through some channel.
- Receiver decodes message and interprets its meaning.
- Receiver may provide feedback to sender by encoding a message in response.

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One-Way Communication Is Common 2

One-Way Communication continued

Communication process is often hampered by noise.

- Noise is anything that interferes with accurate communication.
- Examples: phone interruptions, thoughts about other things, fatigue, or stress.

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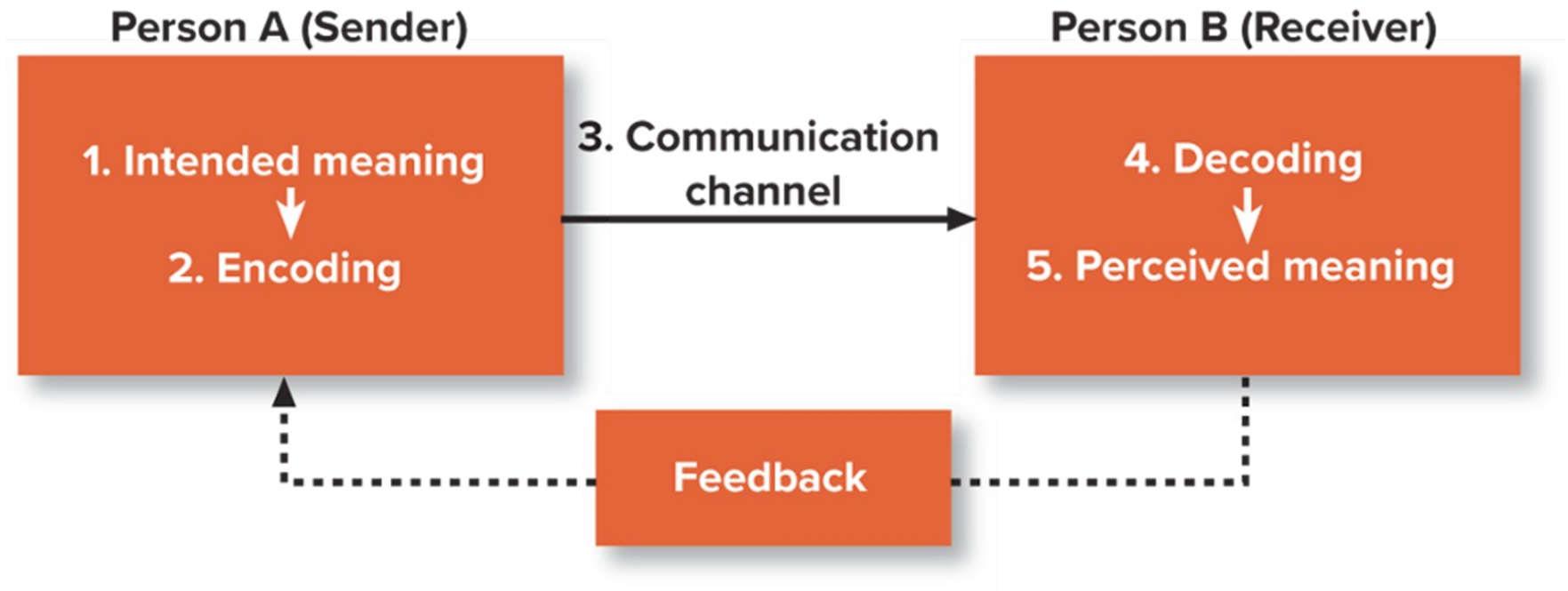
Exhibit 13.1 A General Model of Communication



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Communication Should Flow in More Than One Direction

Two-Way Communication

Process in which information flows in two directions: receiver provides feedback, and sender is receptive to the feedback.

- Example: a manager's email invites the receiver to reply with any questions.

More difficult and time-consuming than one-way communication, but more accurate.

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Exhibit 13.2 Zoom, A Two-Way Communication Channel

Your professor (*sender*) prepares a lecture (*encodes message*) and delivers it virtually via Zoom (*channel*) to students (*receivers*) who interpret the meaning of the presented material (decoding).

A student (*now the sender*) asks the professor (*now the receiver*) to clarify a concept on one of the slides (*feedback*).

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Watch Out for Communication Pitfalls

Communication Pitfalls

Sender's intended message does not always get across to receiver.

Errors can occur at every stage:

- Encoding.
- Decoding.
- Transmission.

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Everyone Uses Perceptual and Filtering Processes

Perception

- Process of receiving and interpreting information.
- Subjective, and subject to bias.

Filtering

- Process of withholding, ignoring, or distorting information.
- Both senders and receivers.

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Mistaken Perceptions Cause Misunderstandings

Mistaken Perceptions

- Sending mixed signals is inadvertent.
- Different people attend to different things, interpret the same message differently.
- Cross-cultural differences magnify these difficulties.

- Strategies to avoid issues:

1. Ensure the receivers attend to the message being sent.
2. Consider the other party's frame of reference and attempt to convey the message with that viewpoint in mind.
3. Take concrete steps to minimize perceptual errors and improper signals in sending and receiving.
4. Send consistent messages.

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Communications Flow Through Different Channels

Oral Communication

Includes face-to-face discussion, telephone conversations, videoconferences and formal presentations.

- Feedback is immediate and direct.
- Receiver can sense sincerity.
- More persuasive.
- Can be less expensive.

Written Communication

Includes texts, emails, memos, letters, reports, training materials, and other written documents.

- Allows for revision.
- Permanent record.
- Message remains the same.
- Receiver has more time to process.

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Choose the Correct Channel

Face-to-face communication can be more effective than other channels when you want to receive immediate feedback or present your ideas in a persuasive manner.

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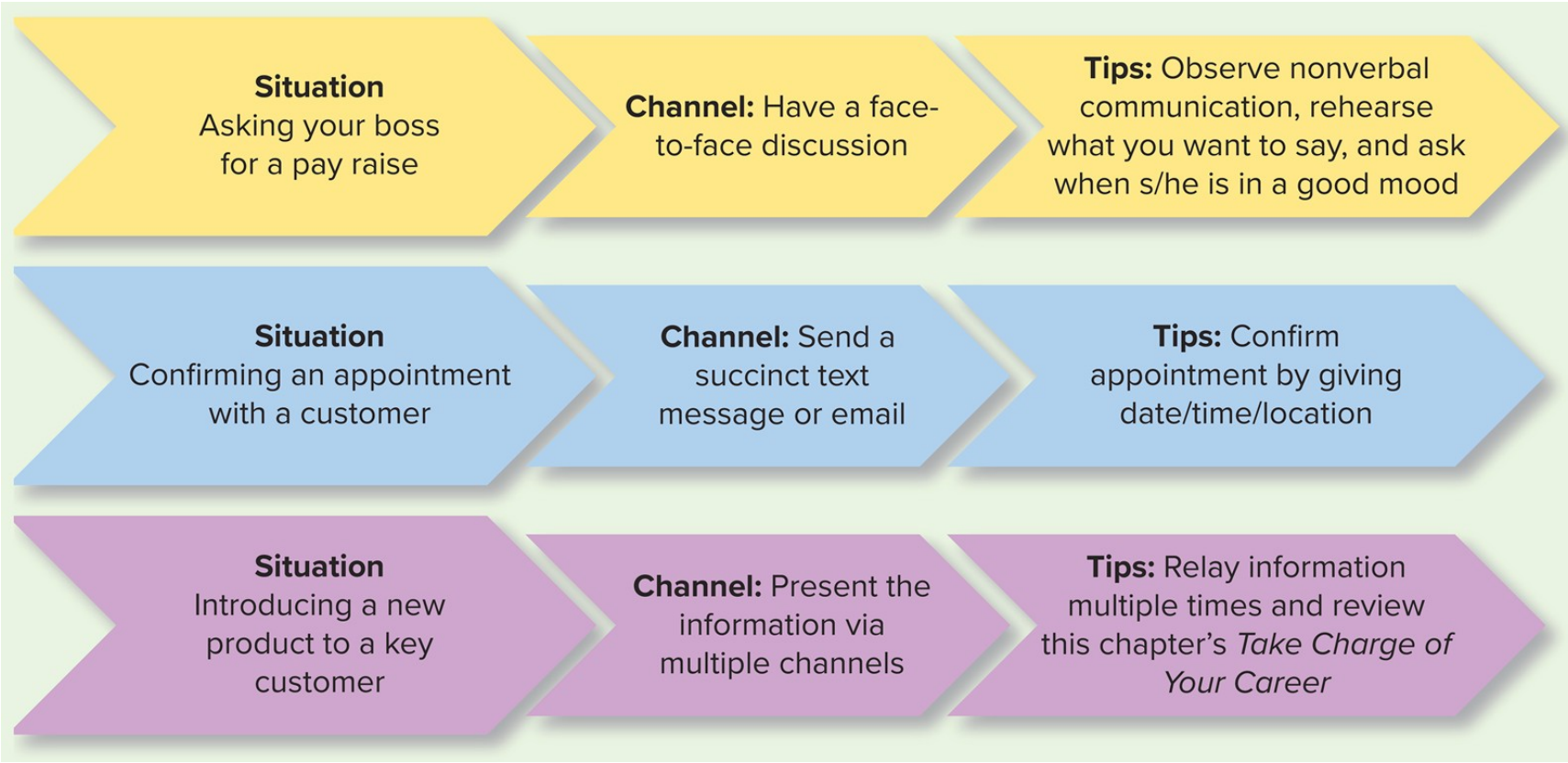
Exhibit 13.4 Using Communication Channels Effectively


Situation
Asking your boss for a pay raise
Channel: Have a face-to-face discussion
Tips: Observe nonverbal communication, rehearse what you want to say, and ask when s/he is in a good mood
Situation
Confirming an appointment with a customer
Channel: Send a succinct text message or email
Tips: Confirm appointment by giving date/time/location
Situation
Introducing a new product to a key customer
Channel: Present the information via multiple channels
Tips: Relay information multiple times and review this chapter's Take Charge of Your Career

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Digital Media Offer Flexible, Efficient Channels

Digital Media

Digital media tools are widespread in business.

- Online team collaboration and communication platforms.
- Teleconferencing and videoconferencing.
- Social media.
- Blogging.

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Exhibit 13.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Using Digital Media at Work

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Allows information to be shared rapidly with large numbers of stakeholders.	• May not be effective for solving some types of complex problems.
• Enables routine messages to be delivered with speed and efficiency.	• Prevents interpretation of subtle nonverbal cues conveyed by the sender.
• Reduces time and expenses related to traveling, photocopying, and mailing.	• Engenders less trust among users than face-to-face communication.
• Encourages more people to participate and share their ideas with others.	• Messages can hurt feelings, be insensitively worded, or be intentionally hurtful.
• Leaves a permanent record of communication for later reference.	• Sensitive or private information can be leaked or sent to the wrong recipient.

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Managing the Digital Load

Managing Digital Communication

- Separate the truly important from the routine.
- Don’t get in the habit of hitting “reply all.”
- Organize by creating email folders sorted by subject, priority, or sender.
- Ask coworker to check nonroutine emails before sending.
- Don’t hit “send” unless you’d be comfortable having your email on the front page of a newspaper, being read by your family, or seen by a competitor.

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Hybrid Work

Working Remotely

- Recent shift to remote and hybrid work situations.
- Benefits include saving money on rent/utilities, better hiring and retention of talented people.
- Long-term impact on productivity and morale is unknown.
- Loss of too many “human moments.”

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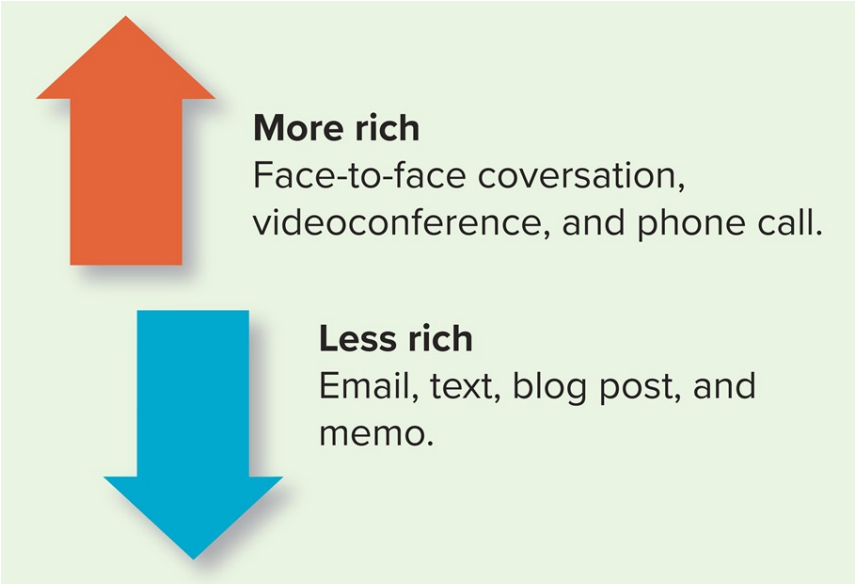
Use “Richer” Media for Complex or Critical Messages

Media Richness

The degree to which a communication channel conveys information.

- Send difficult or unusual messages through richer media.
- Send simple and routine messages through less rich media.
- Use multiple media for important messages.

Exhibit 13.6
Differences in Media Richness



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Improving Communication Skills

Improving Skills

- A demonstrated ability to communicate effectively makes you a more attractive job candidate.
- Many strategies to improve skills exist for both senders and receivers.

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Senders Can Improve Their Communication Skills [1]

Presentation and Persuasion Skills

- Consider persuasion a process of learning from each other and negotiating a shared solution.
- Demonstrate authenticity through nonverbal and verbal cues.

Writing Skills

- Use clear and logical thinking.
- Strive for clarity, organization, readability, and brevity.
- Take time to revise.
- Be specific and concrete.

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Senders Can Improve Their Communication Skills 2

Language

- Simplicity is usually best.
- Consider the receiver’s background.
- Word meanings vary by culture.
- Learn the local language.

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Nonverbal Signals Matter, Too

Conveys information about emotions, power, relationships.

Send positive nonverbal signals:

- Use time appropriately.
- Make office arrangement conducive to open communication.
- Remember body language.

Nonverbal signals vary in different countries.

- Must correctly interpret the nonverbal signals of others.
- Silence has different meanings.

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Use Nonverbal Cues

Learning to observe and interpret accurately people's nonverbal cues will help you communicate more effectively.

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Receivers Can Improve Their Listening, Reading, and Observational Skills [1]

Listening

- **Reflection** is a process by which a person states what they believe the other person is saying.

Effective listening techniques:

- Find an area of interest.
- Judge content, not delivery.
- Hold your fire.
- Listen for ideas.
- Be flexible.
- Resist distraction.
- Exercise your mind.
- Keep your mind open.
- Capitalize on thought speed.
- Work at listening.

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Receivers Can Improve Their Listening, Reading, and Observational Skills 2

Reading

- Reading mistakes are common and costly.
- Read important messages as soon as possible.
- Read materials outside your immediate concerns.

Observing

- Effective communicators are skilled at observing and interpreting.
- Useful observations come from visiting people, plants, and other locations to get a firsthand view.
- Must accurately interpret what you observe.

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Organizational Communication

Communication

- Affects individuals, relationships, groups and teams, and entire organizations.
- The flow of information impacts performance at every level.

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Downward Communication Directs, Motivates, Coaches, and Informs

Downward Communication

- Information that flows from higher to lower levels in the organization's hierarchy.
- Important functions: helps employees identify with the company, improve their attitudes, and make decisions consistent with the organization's objectives.
- Difficulties may arise from information overload, lack of openness between managers and employees, and filtering.
- **Coaching** is dialogue with a goal of helping someone become more effective and achieve their full potential on the job.

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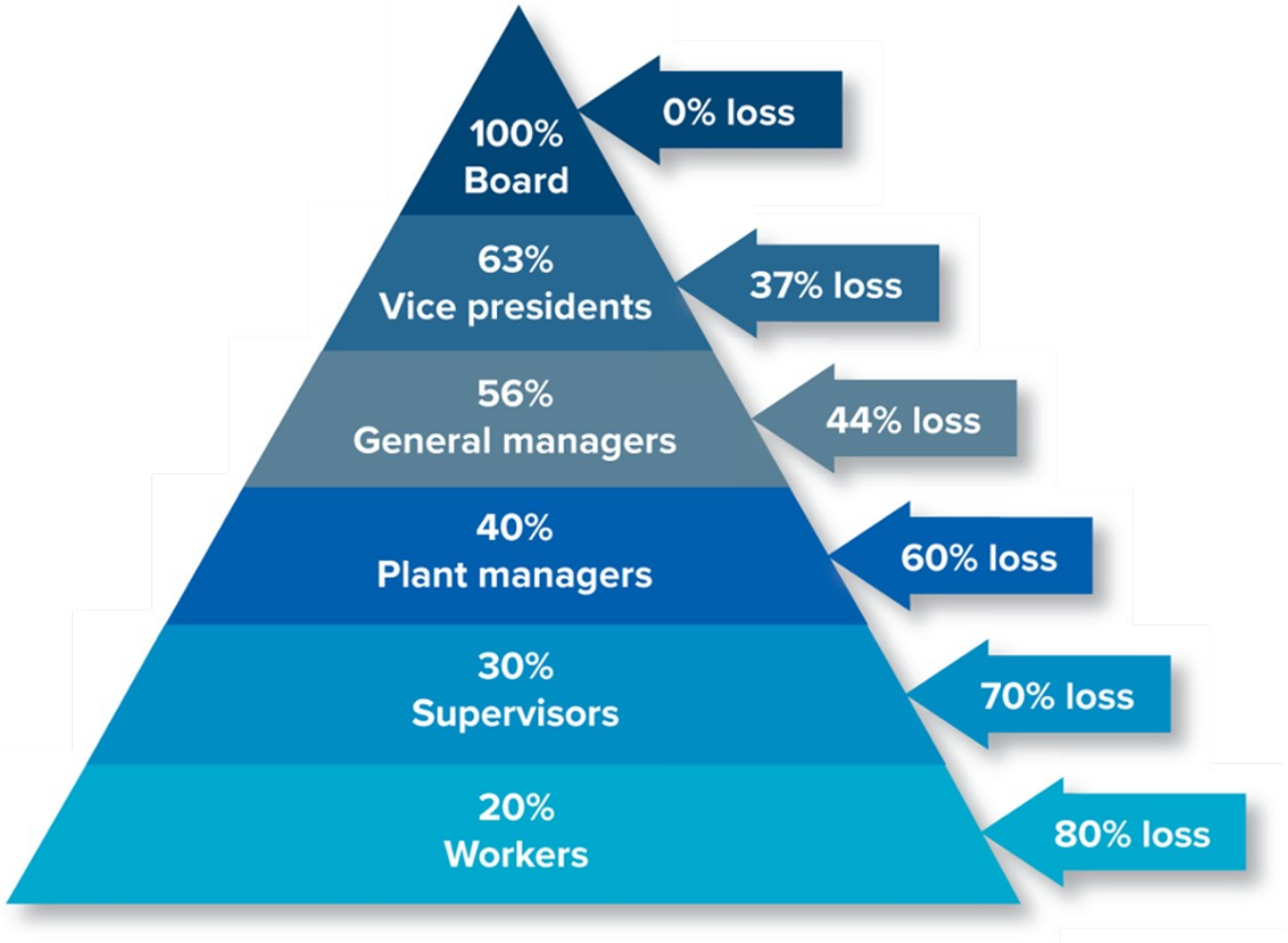
Exhibit 13.7 Information Loss in Downward Communication



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Upward Communication Is Invaluable [1]

Upward Communication

Travels from lower to higher ranks in the hierarchy.

Important functions:

- Management gains a more accurate picture.
- Employees can communicate upward.
- Facilitates downward communication.

Filtering suppresses bad news.

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Upward Communication Is Invaluable 2

Managing Upward Communication

- Facilitate and motivate upward communication.
- Consider MBWA (management by wandering around).
- Useful upward communication must be reinforced, not punished.
- Exercise **voice:** speaking up with good intentions, rather than remaining silent.

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Horizontal Communication Fosters Collaboration

Horizontal Communication

Information shared among people on same hierarchical level.

Important functions:

- Allows units to share information, coordinate work, and solve mutual problems.
- Helps resolve conflicts.
- Provides social and emotional support.

When decisions in one unit affect another, information must be shared horizontally.

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Communicating at All Levels

Effective managers encourage and facilitate upward and horizontal communication.

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Informal Communication Needs Attention

Informal Communication

Grapevine: social network of informal communications.

Important functions:

- Provides people with information.
- Helps them solve problems.
- Teaches them how to do their work successfully.

Listen to it, but evaluate before believing what you hear.

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Managing Informal Communication

Rumors

- A manager hearing a story that could get out of hand should talk to the key people involved to get the facts and their perspectives.
- Dispel uncertainties by providing facts and establish open communications and trust over time.
- A manager should neutralize rumors once they have started.

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Transparent Information Flow Builds Trust

Transparency

People's beliefs that the information their employer and others send them is of high quality, as defined by accuracy, timeliness, and full disclosure of relevant information.

- Strengthens people's trust in employers and one another.

Boundaryless Organization

- One in which there are no barriers to information flow.
- Information available as needed.
- Information moves fast and easily.

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Group Challenge

One-Way and Two-Way Communication

Follow the leader’s instructions to complete the prescribed drawing.

- Round one: no questions.
- Round two: you may ask questions.

Which method worked better and why?

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Chapter Review

One-way communication.

Advantages of two-way communication.

Communication problems to avoid.

- Perception, filtering.

Appropriate communication channels; digital channels.

- Hybrid work, media richness.

How to become a better “sender” and “receiver.”

Downward, upward, and horizontal communication.

Grapevine.

Transparency and boundaryless organization.

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